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## Police Knowledge Fund Review

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# Police Knowledge Fund Review

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# Executive summary

The College of Policing, the Higher Education Funding Council for England and the Home Office launched the two year Police Knowledge Fund (PKF) in 2015 to increase evidence in priority areas and embed an evidence-based approach in policing. The £10 million fund supported the development of 14 police-academic research collaborations involving 39 police forces and 30 academic institutions across the UK, with funds awarded ranging from £250,000 to £1.3 million.

This report presents findings from the national review of the PKF programme. It draws on data collected and compiled through a range of methods including semi-structured interviews, an online survey and synthesis of the 14 projects' final reports. It presents specific examples of some of the fund's activities and outputs and their impact on key areas of policing policy and practice, against its three key objectives, to:

- build sustained capability among officers and staff to understand, critique and use research
- embed or accelerate understanding of crime and policing issues and evidence-based problem-solving approaches
- demonstrate innovation in building the research evidence base and applying it through knowledge exchange and translation across all levels of policing.

The report also shares learning from the fund on what factors were found to influence the success, or otherwise, of developing and maintaining effective police-academic research partnerships.

“ I strongly believe that this has been the most important innovation in policing during my service. In times of austerity, using methods that can be empirically shown to work is vital, not only in terms of operational capacity but from a public confidence and legitimacy perspective. It also leads to innovation and creativity and helps align some of the best minds in the country to challenging policing problems. ”

police officer

## What has the PKF achieved?

The PKF reflects a broad, diverse and ambitious programme of work. Examples of demonstrable impact on adopting an evidence-based approach to policing can be seen at a local, regional and national level. While it is too early to fully understand the impact of the individual collaborations and of the programme as a whole, the breadth and scale of the activity and outputs delivered across the programme is promising.

At the most fundamental level, over 30 partnerships were developed between police forces and academic institutions that were not in place prior to the PKF. These supported several hundred academics and police practitioners to work collaboratively to share skills, knowledge and experience in generating and using research evidence.

### Built capability to use and understand research

Across all PKF collaborations officers and staff have been engaged in a broad range of continuing professional development and learning activities around using and understanding research evidence. These activities have contributed to a shift in mind-sets towards evidence-based policing (EBP) across ranks and roles and increased capability of officers and staff to apply evidence-based approaches which can help them respond to new challenges in a more informed and cost-effective way.

“ (The workshop) introduced me to evidence-based policing, giving me tools to identify tried, tested and therefore more successful solutions. It has also given me the confidence to test my own assumptions, to develop new approaches. This helps me to provide a more effective service to the communities I serve... ”

police officer

### Impact included:

Over 14,000 users accessing new online learning resources

Over 500 police officers and staff attending EBP workshops and short courses

220+ new police postgraduate students

Over 200 police officers and staff producing short research projects such as master's dissertations

Around 50 officers and staff undertaking research fellowships and secondments

Three new postgraduate certificates in policing developed and delivered in addition to several additional accredited undergraduate and postgraduate EBP modules.

## Accelerated understanding of crime and policing issues

Across the programme, police and academics worked together to co-create, deliver and use quality research evidence to improve decision making and practice. A range of new research studies, including problem analyses, realist evaluations, randomised control trials and systematic reviews have been produced in priority policing areas such as child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, mental health and digital policing. This research activity has provided new insights and informed the development of new tools and technical solutions to support tactical and strategic decision making, as well as contributing more generally to policing improvement through changes to training, policy and strategy.

## Shared and translated knowledge

PKF collaborations used a broad range of approaches to support the reciprocal sharing of knowledge, experience and expertise which have contributed to translating learning and applying it to police practice. These included the development of new:

- knowledge exchange mechanisms, including online knowledge hubs and platforms, advisory and expert groups, conferences and workshops, and research reports and briefings
- operational tools that help officers and staff use research and evidence in practice
- fellowships and exchanges that encouraged and enabled direct engagement between academics and police officers and staff.

### Examples of research produced

EMPAC: 19 research projects

CPRL: 6 problem-solving research projects

Keele: 5 test bed research projects

Connect, BPC: 2 systematic reviews

Cambridge: 10 randomised control trials

## Impact of PKF activity on strategy, policy, practice and training.

### For example:

**Research activity** informed the development of best practice guidelines and procedures for the police use of cloud evidence.

New **digital evidence mobile app** for front line officers providing training and guidance to help them correctly identify, capture and preserve digital evidence.

Academic partners used **social media platform** to provide live time operational support in terms of data collection and analysis in relation to high profile terrorist attacks, murders and public order events.

**Research on child interviewing** simulation has led to the development of a simulator for practical use in police training.

## What have we learned about developing police-academic research partnerships?

One of the key aims of the PKF was to facilitate and support the development of sustainable collaborative partnerships between police and academia. The review identifies and describes the following seven building blocks as underpinning a successful police-academic partnership:

- **Common vision**, objectives and goals
- **Effective management** of the supporting infrastructure
- **Compatible partners** at an organisational and individual level
- **Strong leadership** by both police and academic partners
- Frequent and effective **communication** between participating partners
- **Flexibility** and tolerance to change, in terms of expectations and allocating resources
- **Respect** for cultural differences

The PKF demonstrates that when these factors are considered and the collaboration is working effectively, it can have real tangible benefits for both policing and academia.



## Conclusion

At the heart of the PKF, and underpinning its contribution to evidence-based practice, is its potential to accelerate the development of collaborative academic-police partnerships throughout England and Wales. There are a number of strong success stories in the fostering and maturing police-academic collaborations under the PKF programme. Many partnerships have been successful in taking ownership of specific policing challenges and exploring how best these can be resolved through research. Partners have gained valuable insights into the working practices of partner agencies, which proved beneficial for knowledge exchange. Working in partnership has increased opportunities and enthusiasm for research.

In summary, there is evidence from across the programme of how the PKF has:

- led to a better understanding by academics of the policing context and vice versa allowing the development of better structures, priorities and success measures to underpin effective partnership working and help to maximise their impact
- led to a shift in thinking about research by academics, highlighting the potential role practitioners have in developing, delivering and translating research
- developed and accelerated links between academia and the police, facilitating more effective partnership working and maximising impact
- supported the growth of research centres of policing expertise, providing a stimulus for a new emphasis on practitioner led research training and guidance that has the capacity to reach beyond policing related disciplines
- developed new structures and processes embedded within the infrastructure of force-academic activity, and in some cases, of funding secured, to continue the work of collaborations beyond the life of the PKF

These are promising but early steps in a longer journey. Two years is a relatively short period in which to develop, deliver and embed activities, and to measure their impact. The challenge going forward will be to maintain the momentum across the collaborations and to focus on co-driven knowledge translation and sustained activities to embed the many products and outputs into police policy and practice.



# Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank all the academic and police partners involved in the 14 PKF collaborations, particularly those who contributed to the survey and the final impact reports that formed the basis of this review. These detailed the successes achieved through the collaborations, and also the challenges involved in the development and maintenance of police-academic partnerships, giving us a more nuanced understanding of what is required for effective collaborative working going forward.

Our grateful thanks also go to Professors Geoff Berry and Betsy Stanko for their ongoing support to the PKF in their role as Independent Advisors, as well as for their advice, guidance and comments on this report. Finally, this review would not have been possible without the continued support of Nerys Thomas (Head of the College's Knowledge, Research and Practice unit) and her helpful comments and feedback on earlier drafts of the report.

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# Introduction

The Police Knowledge Fund (PKF) was launched in 2015 to support the development of sustainable education and research collaborations between police forces and academic institutions, increase evidence-based knowledge and embed an evidence-based approach in policing.

Launched in 2015 by the College of Policing, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Home Office, the £10 million fund supported 14 police-academic research collaborations across the UK in delivering an extensive programme of activities. While the focus and level of funding for each collaboration varied, collectively they have demonstrated the potential such partnerships can have in delivering change at all levels of policing. This includes increasing the confidence and capability of police officers and staff to adopt an evidence-based approach to practice and delivering new tactical tools, processes and knowledge exchange structures. The development of these capabilities will enable the police service and other agencies to better adapt and respond to the modern policing environment.

## Report content

This report presents the key findings from the national review of the PKF. It begins by providing an **overview** of the 14 collaborations allocated funding under the PKF and outlines the **research methods** used to inform the review. It then describes the **impact** the PKF has had on key areas of policing policy and practice, providing tangible examples of some of the key activities and outputs delivered and describing the impact of these activities in the context of the fund's objectives. Finally, it shares **learning** from the fund on what factors were found to influence the success, or otherwise, of developing and maintaining effective police-academic research partnerships.

Throughout the report we use the terms **partnership** and **collaboration** interchangeably to describe police and academics working across organisational boundaries in pursuit of shared objectives.

# Background

The College's work to understand best practice in policing methods and to embed **evidence-based policing** (EBP) has highlighted the benefits of productive partnerships between police forces and academic institutions ([College of Policing Five Year Strategy 2014](#)). These benefits are two way. Academics recognise the importance of demonstrating the impact and application of their research<sup>1</sup>, and police colleagues see the value in the generation of robust and relevant research evidence to inform their decision making and practice and in developing the capability of the police workforce to create and use this evidence.

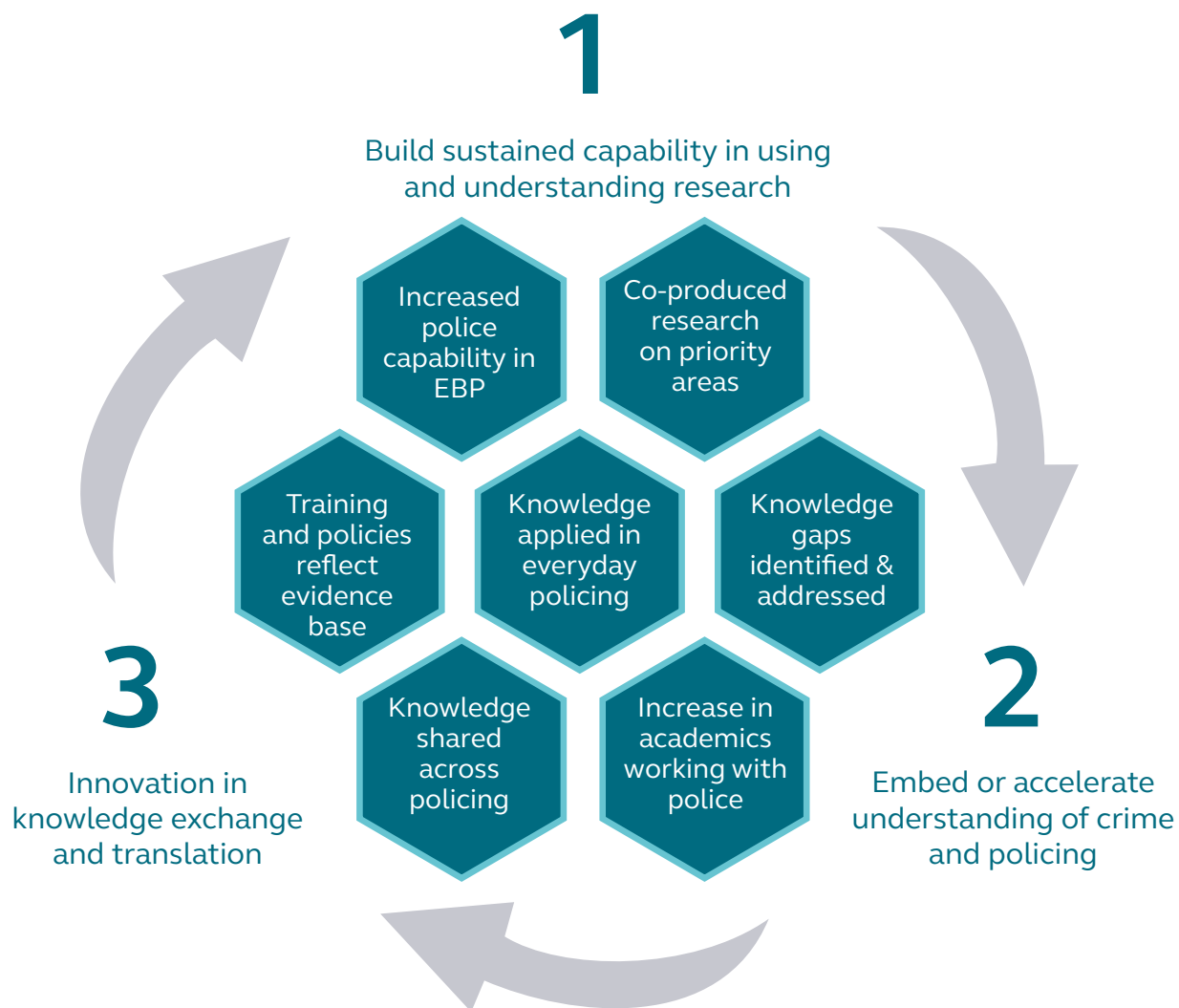
To achieve its aim, the fund had three key objectives:



1. Quality of research in UK higher education institutions is assessed using the [Research Excellence Framework \(REF\)](#). One of the three key elements assessed is the impact of the research beyond academia.

**Figure 1** summarises how the objectives of the fund should work together to deliver a range of outcomes that were identified at the start of the programme as indicating what success would look like for the PKF. These have shaped the content of this review which explores progress in each of these areas.

Figure 1: What does success look like for the PKF?



# The Police Knowledge Fund collaborations

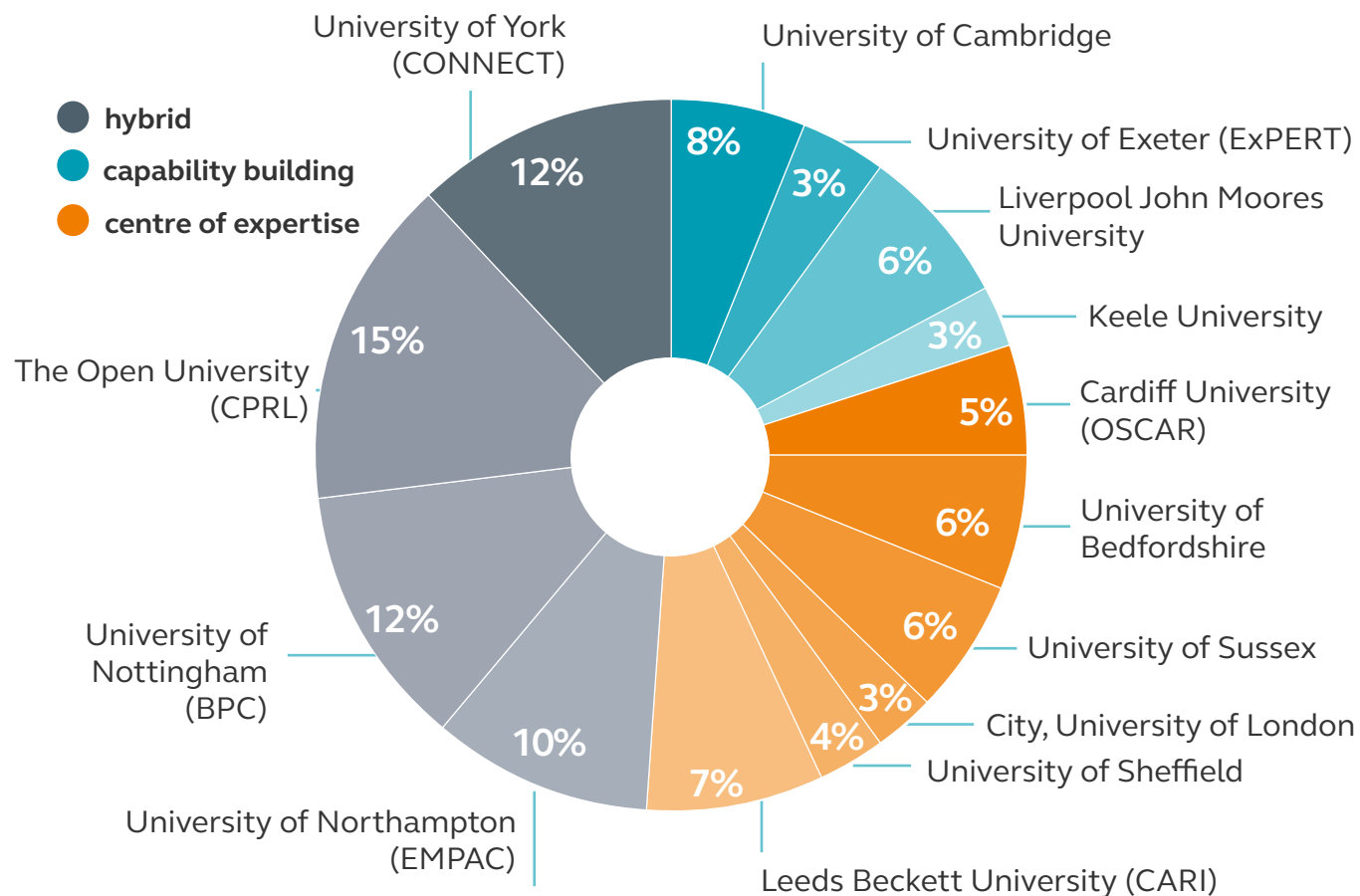
In September 2015, PKF funding was awarded to 14<sup>2</sup> collaborations involving 39 police forces and 30<sup>3</sup> academic institutions. Total funds awarded to individual collaborations ranged from £250,000 to £1.3 million.

For the purpose of this review, and to aid analysis, we have categorised the collaborations into three broad areas based on their key focus and activities. These collaboration types are:

- **capability building**, with a key focus on building the skills and capability of police officers and staff to generate, understand, use and appraise research evidence.
- **centre of expertise**, with a clear focus on undertaking research on particular crime types of issues facing policing, for example, child sexual exploitation (CSE) or mental health.
- **hybrid**, with a core focus on capability building and research activity.

**Figure 2** details how the funding was allocated across the 14 collaborations, by the key focus of the collaboration.

Figure 2: The proportion of funds allocated to each collaboration, by type



2. An additional project was also awarded funding but this offer was then withdrawn due to delays at the project initiation stage which affected the project's viability within the timescales of the PKF.

3. The initial number of forces involved in the PKF was 39 but this increased during the funding period.

There were four **capability building** collaborations which together were awarded a fifth of the total funding at an average cost of £465,000 per collaboration. Most of these partnerships were local rather than regional, with one police force working in collaboration with a single university. For example: Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) with Merseyside Police and University of Exeter with Devon and Cornwall Police (ExPERT). The average cost of these local capability building collaborations was just under £375,000.

Just under a third (30 per cent) of the fund was awarded to the six **centres of expertise** with an average cost of around £455,000 per collaboration. Some of these centres focused on priority cross-cutting issues such as CSE (University of Bedfordshire), open source information (OSCAR) and cybercrime (CARI) with an average cost per centre of around £530,000. Others focused on one aspect of a policing issue, such as investigative evidence in sexual offences training (City, University of London), restorative justice (Sheffield) or social media and hate crime (University of Sussex). For these centres, the average cost was lower, at around £380,000. Most of these centres involved one or two universities working in partnership with a small number of forces.

**Hybrids** were the most complex, focusing their efforts on evidence generation and capability building and accounting for around half of all PKF funding. The average cost of the six hybrid collaborations was £1 million - they tended to be either regional, such as the East Midlands Policing Academic Collaboration (EMPAC), or national, such as the University of Nottingham's Better Policing Collaborative (BPC). These hybrids varied as to the number of forces and universities involved, with some including one university and multiple forces and others, multiple universities and multiple forces.

Further details on each of the awarded collaborations can found on the [College website](#).



# Method

This review draws on data collected and compiled through a range of methods including:

- **Appraisal, review and synthesis of the final reports** provided by each of the 14 collaborations on conclusion of the PKF programme, along with closure reports produced by the PKF programme manager and the HEFCE finance lead.
- Synthesis and analysis of outputs from a number of **workshops** with police and academic partners held throughout the duration of the PKF.
- **Semi-structured interviews** with the 14 PKF **academic leads**, and a small number of **policing leads** for each of the collaborations. These were conducted half way through the fund and again towards the end of the programme.
- **120 academic and police partner** responses to an **online survey**<sup>4</sup> administered to those involved in the PKF collaborations.
- Ten **semi-structured interviews** conducted by the Independent Advisors<sup>5</sup> with members of the **PKF National Advisory Group**<sup>6</sup> between February and May 2017.

Throughout the report we use the terms partnership and collaboration interchangeably to describe police and academics working across organisational boundaries in pursuit of shared objectives.

4. The survey included questions developed by the National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools (2008). Partnership self-assessment tool. Hamilton, ON: McMaster University.

<http://www.nccmt.ca/knowledge-repositories/search/10>

5. Two Independent Advisors provided support and co-ordination across the 14 collaborations, identifying opportunities for collaborative working and shared learning, providing expert advice and guidance as required during the funding period and contributing to the national review of the programme.

6. The College's PKF National Advisory Group included representatives from the funding partners (the Home Office and the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE)), the Superintendents' Association and the UK's What Works Network. This advisory group met quarterly to maximise the fund's national benefit and to provide advice on its delivery.

# Impact of the PKF

The 14 collaborations supported by the two year fund have undertaken a broad, diverse and ambitious programme of work. Examples of demonstrable impact on adopting an evidence-based approach to policing can be seen at a local, regional and national level.

At the most fundamental level, over 30 partnerships were developed between police forces and academic institutions that were not in place prior to the PKF. These supported several hundred academics and police practitioners to work collaboratively to share skills, knowledge and experience in generating and using research evidence. Where previous collaborations did exist, the PKF has strengthened and developed these, and transformed their nature from operating at an individual to an organisational level.

The report presents evidence of how PKF activity has had an impact on the way academics engage with police partners, of structures and processes now embedded in the infrastructure of force-academic activity, and in some cases, of funding secured to continue the work of collaborations beyond the life of the PKF.

Partners across the collaborations report the instrumental effect the programme has had in embedding evidence-based approaches, leading to a change in the way research evidence is understood, produced and applied at all levels of policing through:

- co-creating and implementing relevant and accessible research evidence with direct application to policing problems and driving improvements in priority areas
- supporting continuing professional development (CPD) through the development and delivery of learning resources that have fed into a shift in mind-sets towards EBP across ranks and roles
- designing and delivering a range of varied and innovative knowledge exchange activities aimed at embedding research evidence into daily policing decision making and practice.

While it is too early to fully understand the impact of the individual collaborations and of the programme as a whole, the breadth and scale of the activity and outputs delivered across the programme is promising.

This section describes some of the specific activities and outputs delivered under the fund, and maps these, with their reported impacts, to the fund's three key objectives.

“While we can't expect to move the earth in two years, the type and level of activity going on is encouraging.”

National Advisory Group member

## How have we identified impact?

At the end of the funding period, each of the 14 collaborations produced a report describing their key activities, outputs and impacts. The content of these reports was synthesised across the programme and key areas of impact were identified and analysed in line with the programme's aim and objectives.

While this approach identified varied and diverse reported impacts there are a number of factors which should be considered when interpreting these findings.

The reports varied in breadth, depth and quality. It is likely that there were additional impacts that were not detailed, or may not have been visible to the review authors at the point of submission. In addition, collaborations did not always clearly articulate their theory of change or measures of success at the start of the programme which limited the extent to which they could identify, measure and present impact.

Impact was reported shortly after closure of the programme. Therefore, the focus is primarily on short-term impact, providing a snapshot at the point the report was produced. This affects the nature of impact reported, with the focus on project outputs and deliverables, for example, the number of police officers and staff who attended a workshop or course, or the delivery of a research report or technical tool. We are not yet in the position to report on longer-term impacts. These could include how the findings of a research project, the delivery of a training programme or the receipt of an academic qualification have had an impact on operational practice, although we do report this where possible.

Finally, the scale and magnitude of the impacts across the programme has meant that not all reported impacts can be described. This review provides an overview of the breadth of activity. Further details on individual collaborations can be sought from the project leads detailed on the [College website](#).

## Impact of the PKF against its three objectives

**Figure 3** lists some of the key areas of activity supported by the fund against each of the three objectives, with examples of reported impact. The following section provides some tangible examples of these.

Figure 3: PKF objectives, activities and impacts

Objective	Activity	Impact
<b>Build sustained capability of research use in policing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EBP workshops, training and online learning resources</li> <li>Accredited academic programmes and new learners</li> <li>Practitioner involvement in research, e.g. theses, fellowships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed skills and confidence to appraise, generate and apply evidence</li> <li>Engaged workforce in learning pathways and increased culture of CPD</li> <li>Applying new knowledge and skills to everyday decision making</li> </ul>
<b>Embed or accelerate understanding of crime and policing issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New primary research to address knowledge gaps and priority areas</li> <li>Reviews of research evidence</li> <li>Analysis of data sources using new approaches and techniques</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified how and where improvements can be made to policies and procedure</li> <li>Developed new and existing tools and techniques to inform tactical and strategic decision making</li> <li>Shift towards using research evidence in designing and delivering police training</li> </ul>
<b>Innovation in knowledge exchange and translation activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge exchange groups and online hubs</li> <li>Conferences and workshops</li> <li>Research reports and briefings</li> <li>Technical tools and resources</li> <li>Fellowships and exchanges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-generation of research questions and solutions around priority areas</li> <li>Relevant easy-to-understand evidence routinely available to police</li> <li>Developing EBP infrastructures to support embedding of EBP approach</li> </ul>



## Objective:

Build sustained capability among officers and staff to understand, critique and use research

The first PKF objective relates to capability building in EBP. Challenges faced by policing are becoming increasingly diverse and complex. Increasing the capability of officers and staff to apply evidence-based approaches can help them respond in a more informed and cost-effective way.

All PKF collaborations reported some impact in this area through engaging officers and staff in a broad range of CPD and learning activities around using and understanding research evidence. For some, building capability such as developing and delivering EBP workshops, training and accredited academic programmes, was their key focus. Other PKF collaborations, such as those focused on developing expertise in a particular policing priority area, may not have delivered formal EBP training or education. Rather, they developed capability by involving police practitioners in co-designing and co-producing small-scale research projects or through fellowship or secondment initiatives.

Impact under the PKF's first objective is presented in three key areas:

- attendees or students accessing EBP workshops, short courses and online educational learning resources
- new accredited EBP-related academic programmes or modules at undergraduate and postgraduate level
- other capability building mechanisms such as involvement in small-scale research projects, for example, producing academic theses or work-based research studies.

## EBP workshops, short courses and online learning materials

Several collaborations aimed to increase awareness and receptivity to EBP through designing and delivering workshops and short face-to-face training courses on developing skills and knowledge around finding, understanding and using research evidence. The design and content of the programmes varied across collaborations, from two-hour research methods masterclasses for senior staff (**Connect**) to training programmes spanning several days for staff at all levels (**ExPERT, Connect**). Their overall aims were similar, however, to develop the capability and confidence of staff in engaging with research evidence to positively influence decision making and practice.

Nationally, more than 500 police officers, staff and other key stakeholders attended these short programmes over the two-year period. Most of those who provided feedback reported increased knowledge, capability and awareness around using research and evidence. Practitioners reported the

focus on research into practice as particularly valuable, providing the opportunity to consider and apply their learning in their own role and responsibilities. Techniques used to support this included:

- participants developing their own research projects, proposals and/or action plans to be shared with trainers and/or line managers after completing the sessions (**BPC, ExPERT**)
- follow-up sessions providing an opportunity for attendees to identify, share and discuss their own examples of applying research to practice (**ExPERT**)
- continued mentoring of individual officers (**Bedfordshire**)
- subject specific learning, drawing on evidence, contextualised to particular roles and or projects, for example, cybercrime (**CARI**) and CSE (**Bedfordshire**)
- operational workshops bringing together police officers/staff and external experts to explore the nature, value and challenges of applying EBP in a local operational setting (**Keele**)

Figure 4: New learners on evidence-based policing-related short courses

14,000+

Accessed online learning resources

500+

EBP workshop and short course attendees

We do not have the evidence to compare the effectiveness of these different approaches. However, across the collaborations, there are many examples of attendees using their acquired knowledge to inform decision making and practice, as well as some practitioners going on to undertake or oversee new research initiatives. This included:

- academics at Leeds Beckett University related the content of their one-day research methods programme delivered to West Yorkshire Police's Digital Forensics and Cybercrime teams to the context of their specific projects, helping attendees to understand how the benefits of the research could be directly applied in their operational roles (**CARI**)
- participants in the EBP short courses delivered by **BPC** valued the emphasis placed on the practical application of their learning, which enabled them to see the scope for embedding these skills into work-based activity where it could have direct tactical and strategic impact

- attendees to the **ExPERT** follow-up events described how attendance at the initial workshops had facilitated their involvement in carrying out research in force, and in using existing research to inform practice.

As well as face-to-face courses, the PKF supported the development of a number of online educational resources, including the **CPRL**'s free Public Leadership course. At the time of analysis, they had over 14,000 registered users. These free resources can be accessed online from anywhere, at any time, offering a flexible learning resource that can fit around other commitments.



**Inspector Gareth Twigg,**  
Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

“During my 22-year police service, problem solving has generally been based on operational experience and traditional practices, none of which is evaluated. ExPERT introduced me to evidence-based policing, giving me tools to identify tried, tested and therefore more successful solutions. It has also given me the confidence to test my own assumptions, to develop new approaches. This helps me to provide a more effective service to the communities I serve. The course has shown me that academic principles aren't beyond me and has inspired me so much that I am soon to start an MSc in Criminology.”

ExPERT



## Accredited academic study

In addition to the workshops, short training sessions and online learning resources, the PKF has contributed to developing and delivering new accredited higher education qualifications and modules.

These programmes are often designed with and for the police, with a core focus on developing capability around research use and EBP. This included:

- a bespoke postgraduate certificate in advanced policing studies at **LJMU**
- two postgraduate certificates in EBP, designed and delivered by **CPRL** and **EMPAC**
- accredited undergraduate and postgraduate modules relevant to EBP in policing, designed and delivered by **LJMU** and **CPRL**
- review of the content of new and existing subject-specific modules and programmes revised in the context of learning from the PKF.

PKF funding has also supported over 220 police officers and staff across all ranks and roles with studying accredited qualifications at postgraduate level, including:

- 100 police officers and staff undertaking a master's in applied criminology and police management at the **University of Cambridge**
- 68 officers on the new postgraduate certificate in advanced policing studies at **LJMU** with nine of these students going onto convert their certificate into a full master's award
- 26 officers and staff registering on **CPRL**'s new postgraduate certificate in evidence-based practice
- 20 police students undertaking the postgraduate certificate in EBP delivered by **EMPAC**
- 6 North Yorkshire police officers undertaking a master's in public management and administration at the University of York (**Connect**)
- 3 part-time PhD **Open University (OU)** students.

Figure 5: Accredited educational programmes, modules and students

220+  
police postgraduate students

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3 x new postgraduate certificates

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New postgraduate and undergraduate EBP modules

This activity has contributed to the development of new learning opportunities which have led to increased EBP awareness and a shift in culture towards using EBP approaches in decision making and practice, and engagement in continuing professional development across a range of ranks and roles. The direct involvement of police officers and staff in developing and delivering these learning and academic resources has also stimulated a new emphasis on practitioner-led learning. This development has the capacity to extend beyond police-specific programmes.

### Other capability building mechanisms

Other initiatives, which include those involving police officers and staff working collaboratively with academics in small-scale research projects, in areas including modern slavery, hate crime and CSE, also contributed to developing key skills and experience around research evidence. As shown in figure 6, over 200 police officers and staff were involved in short research projects such as master's dissertations, and over 50 individuals participated in fellowships and secondments, described in more detail in the [fellowships](#) section of the report.

There were also numerous conferences, workshops and forums that were delivered under the programme. These have had a demonstrable impact in capability building: engaging police officers and staff with relevant research evidence and insights, highlighting the importance of research skills and providing them with opportunities to learn from each other. Further details on these initiatives are described in the [knowledge exchange](#) section below.

Figure 6: Other capability building mechanisms

200+ Short practitioner research projects e.g. postgraduate theses

50+ Fellowships and secondments

Conferences, workshops, forums



## Objective:

Embed or accelerate understanding of crime and policing issues and evidence-based problem-solving approaches

The second objective relates to building the evidence base around crime and policing issues. This involved police and academics working together to co-create, deliver and use quality research evidence to improve decision making and practice. It was important to involve those who would be using the evidence base, with officers and staff defining problems and applying an EBP approach to develop a relevant response.

Core activities under this objective were new research studies, including problem analysis, realist evaluations, randomised control trials (RCTs) and systematic reviews.

### Research studies included:

#### EMPAC

19 research projects across a range of priority areas including cyber, vulnerability and community policing with evidence used to support policy and practice decisions

#### CPRL

6 problem-solving and action research projects in fields including cybercrime, systems thinking, child interviewing and leadership

#### Keele

5 test-bed research projects to address real challenges and issues identified as priorities including vulnerability, multi-agency working and police response to emergency and non-emergency calls

#### Sheffield

Research study exploring good practice in the delivery of restorative justice in policing

#### CARI

Needs assessment study and analysis of cybercrime data leading to new knowledge and technical solutions to improve response and readiness for cybercrime and using digital evidence

#### OSCAR

Series of research studies and testing to develop the knowledge base around the relevance of open source communications data to the investigative, intelligence and engagement functions of policing

#### Bedfordshire

Mapping of CSE evidence base leading to five police-led co-produced primary research projects with learning embedded in CSE guidance and training

The impact from these research activities can be mapped across four key areas: strategy, policy, practice and training. While most of the reported impact relates to policing, it is not confined to this. PKF activity has also influenced thinking and policy in non-policing organisations such as the Department for Education and NHS England, thereby contributing more broadly to creating safer communities and enhancing multidisciplinary responses in priority areas such as CSE and mental health. Examples of specific impact across these four key areas are described below.

## Evidence reviews included:

### Connect, BPC

2 new systematic reviews on mental health training and police-related mental health interventions

### BPC

Series of evidence reviews, including rapid evidence assessments, on areas such as mental health, domestic abuse and cybercrime

### ExPERT

Systematic scoping review on implementing research knowledge in policing

## Randomised control trials included:

### Connect

RCT to assess the effectiveness of mental health training for front line officers

### Cambridge

10 RCTs testing effectiveness of various interventions, including:

- using CCTV cameras to reduce crime and disorder in licensed taxi cabs
- impact of using digital footprint technology on detecting burglaries
- use of an Integrated Case Management Programme on incidents of domestic abuse
- impact of using text message reminders to: increase court appearances; and, tested in a separate thesis, reduce witness non-appearance

## Strategy

On a strategic level, evidence from PKF research projects and evidence reviews has led to changes in local force strategies, including influencing new operating models, resource allocation and role and team restructures.

### Resource allocation

#### Cambridge

Content and learning from the master's programme led to restructuring priorities and resource allocation in a number of forces, particularly in the area of domestic abuse, to provide more focused assistance to those at risk.

### Capability planning and operating environments

#### OSCAR

New research evidence informed the design of the National Crime Agency's national operating room environment and their planning for capability development organisationally.

### Demand and capacity strategy

#### CPRL

An OU senior practitioner's research on demand management is forming the basis of Bedfordshire Police's entire revisit of their demand and capacity strategy in terms of the services offered and how they are delivered in the region.

### Force operating models

#### EMPAC

Findings from new research led to changes in local force operational models, resource allocation to police activities and informed decisions about operating models and approaches to service delivery.

## Policy

PKF activity has directly fed into the review or development of force policy and guidelines across a range of areas, identifying how and where improvements can be made. This activity has included developing research and evidence-informed protocols, risk assessments, problem profiles and standardised best practice policies and guidelines.

### Cloud evidence best practice handbook

#### CARI

Research activity informed the development of best practice guidelines and procedures for the police use of cloud evidence in terms of what and how cloud storage evidence should be collected at a crime scene. Now used as standard practice by West Yorkshire Police.

### Victims' Commissioner

#### Sheffield

Good practice evidence on delivering restorative justice in policing referred to in national debate on victims' policy by the Victims' Commissioner.

### Department for Education (DfE) CSE Guidance

#### Bedfordshire

Learning from mapping CSE evidence base led to commissioning and delivering CSE guidance for DfE and Scotland, and ongoing work with Wales and Northern Ireland.

### Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

#### Sussex

Development and analysis of new Twitter datasets delivered insights to HMICFRS

regarding the public's opinion on various key aspects of policing, with potential to add value to their investigations.

### Operational briefing guidance and templates

#### BPC

New evidence-informed guidance documents, templates and a database of scenarios to support new tested approach to operational briefings (7@7), hosted by Merseyside Police and being considered by other forces. Also adopted by other related organisations, particularly those involved in child protection.

### CSE force protocols

#### Bedfordshire

Mapping of the CSE evidence base has increased the use of academic research evidence in CSE protocols and regional problem profiles.

## Practice

A number of collaborations reported how new research evidence and shared learning and expertise led to developing new tools and technical solutions to support tactical and strategic decision making. Some of these are described in the [knowledge exchange](#) section that follows. Examples also showed how diagnostic research evidence has been applied to live operational problems, including high-profile terrorist attacks, murders and public order events.



**Detective Chief Superintendent Chris Todd**  
West Midlands Police

### Better Policing Collaborative:

“One area in particular which has seen significant progress in recent months is the development of the force’s cybercrime and digital policing strategies. By bringing academics, strategists and practitioners together in a series of workshops, we have been able to fuse existing skills sets around financial and digital investigation to develop innovative ways of tackling emerging threats.”



**Detective Chief Inspector Iain Donnelly**  
West Midlands Police

### OSCAR:

“Ultimately the work conducted by the OSCAR researchers was of the very highest quality and eclipsed the open source work conducted by West Midlands Police. The level of detail and comprehensive coverage that they provided gave me a great deal of confidence as Intel Bronze and my only regret was that we couldn’t have this level of support for every major event!”



## Training

A longer-term aim of the PKF is to support a shift towards an evidence-based approach to delivering and developing police training. Realising this at a national scale within the lifetime of the PKF was ambitious. There are examples of how evidence-based learning has been embedded into local training content, however, and of steps towards embedding accreditation of new training as national standards.

### Call Handler training

#### Keele

Outputs from knowledge exchange groups (KEGs) involving academics and call handlers exploring findings from analysis of 999 and 101 calls were incorporated into the local training of new call handlers and the CPD of existing staff.

### CSE training

#### Bedfordshire

Learning from mapping the CSE evidence base has led to delivering a bespoke CSE training course with new resources and materials embedded in local and national training.

### Sexual offences investigative training

#### City

Delivered a one-week sexual offences investigative training (SOIT) course that is evidence-based and practice-oriented. It is being considered for accreditation by the College as the national standard for SOIT training.

### Police training in child interviewing

#### CPRL

Research on child interviewing simulation has led to the development of a simulator for practical use in police training.

### Clinical staff workforce training

#### BPC

Outputs from evaluating mental health and policing interventions used by NHS England in designing new workforce training and educational curriculum for clinical staff working in the justice sector.

### Mental Health (MH) Training

#### Connect

Co-produced and tested MH training package that was delivered to 249 officers in North Yorkshire Police (NYP) and has since been made mandatory for all those working in NYP intervention stations.

### Training in use of Kent Internet Risk Assessment Tool (KIRAT)

#### BPC

Co-delivery of co-developed training model to around 170 UK police officers and staff on how to deploy KIRAT. This tool is used nationally by forces to better prioritise high-risk offenders and more effectively intervene at an earlier stage of investigations involving indecent images of children. Work is underway with the College to consider how this model could be integrated into a new or existing national training package.



## Objective:

Demonstrate innovation in building the research evidence base and in applying it through knowledge exchange and translation across all levels of policing

Knowledge exchange is key to innovation and integral to meeting the aims of the PKF by facilitating the embedding of relevant, easy-to-understand evidence and learning into police practice. PKF collaborations used a broad range of mechanisms and approaches to support the reciprocal sharing of knowledge, experience and expertise which have contributed to translating learning, and applying it to police practice. This section summarises three key areas of knowledge exchange activity with reported impacts on knowledge sharing and dissemination.

### 1. Mechanisms that promote sharing knowledge and expertise across local, organisational and regional boundaries. This includes:

- **Knowledge exchange groups** bringing together academic and police staff to share relevant learning experience, co-generate research questions and provide a collaborative response to emerging challenges. For example, nearly 600 operational staff, academics and other experts attended groups facilitated by **Keele University** where they were able to share knowledge and experience around themed operational challenges and issues.
- **Online knowledge hubs and platforms** building collaborative capability to identify knowledge gaps, coordinate activities around particular themes, exchange learning and good practice and, more generally, facilitate promoting evidence-based approaches. For example, **Bedfordshire's** CSE and Policing

Hub has established links with 40 police forces nationally, as well as facilitating contact with and between academic CSE experts. **Sussex's** input into developing MOPAC's Online Hate Crime Hub has also facilitated sharing empirical research, delivering new insight in the area of hate crime.

- **Advisory, steering and expert groups** often with multidisciplinary, senior representation that provide valuable leverage for supporting knowledge exchange activities and disseminating learning beyond the life of the PKF.
- **Conferences and workshops** attended by several thousand police officers and staff, academics and other stakeholders across the PKF collaborations, with inputs often accessible online, focusing on areas of emerging research and policing priority issues. For example, **LJMU** hosted a series of thematically structured knowledge exchange workshops between

academics and police officers in areas such as CSE, looked after children and hate crime. **EMPAC** have directly engaged with around 900 police officers and staff through delivering events, seminars and workshops linked to their key research strands.

- **Research reports, briefings, blogs and podcasts**, facilitating the translation of research knowledge to target populations. Often co-produced and co-delivered in a variety of formats, from short films and online vlogs through to full reports and publications in academic peer reviewed journals.

## 2. Tools that help officers and staff use research and evidence in practice.

- Below are examples of tools developed under the PKF which are already having a demonstrable impact on operational police practice. **BPC**, **CARI** and **OSCAR** have each developed several new software solutions, data representation techniques, data linking capabilities and mobile phone apps that have increased capability in policing priority areas such as CSE, cyber and missing persons investigations.
- Police partners have already benefitted from access to these bespoke tools. In some cases, universities are working to make their resources available more widely, either through extended partnerships or organisations such as the College. For example, the Algorithmic Custody Suite Forecasting Model evaluated by a **Cambridge** master's student is being considered for use by another force, **EMPAC's** Impact Capacity Model is being used by colleagues in other policing regions and **CARI's** digital evidence mobile app is being considered for national roll out.

## Tools that help officers and staff use research and evidence in practice

### Digital evidence mobile app

#### CARI

Mobile app for front line officers providing training and guidance to help them correctly identify, capture and preserve digital evidence. Evaluation showed a measurable decrease in the workload of digital forensic units. The College of Policing is working with Leeds Beckett and West Yorkshire Police to explore opportunities to make the app available to all forces.

### Algorithmic Custody Suite Forecasting Model

#### Cambridge

Evaluation led to interest in the model for use in other forces and the development of a legal and ethical framework for its implementation.

### Evidence Visualisation Tool

#### BPC

Made relevant, easy-to-understand evidence linked to day-to-day policing challenges routinely available to police and police and crime commissioners (PCCs). Undergoing testing in forces.

### Sentinel Social Media Platform

#### OSCAR

Provided live time operational support in terms of data collection and analysis in relation to several high profile terrorist attacks, murders and public order events.

### Software platform for accessing sensitive data relating to hate crime

#### Sussex

Centralised Metropolitan Police Service software platform supporting secure access by multiple users to sensitive

datasets with supporting training documentation including tutorials and case studies that have led to increased awareness and understanding around online hate crime.

### Image processing software

#### CARI

New tools and procedures developed providing West Yorkshire Police with a new investigative technique for connecting cases of CSE, by linking photo images to camera fingerprints.

### Impact Capacity Rating Model

#### EMPAC

Explains how research can be designed with impact in mind, and clearly articulates what is required for effective research outcomes which can have meaningful impact on policing. Piloted and in use by forces beyond EMPAC region.

### 3. Fellowships and exchanges that encourage and enable direct engagement between academics and police officers and staff.

Over 50 secondments, fellowships and placements were supported by the PKF across five of the collaborations (**EMPAC, ExPERT, CPRL, CARI** and **LJMU**), providing a valuable opportunity for police officers and staff to work in an academic research team or directly in the PKF project team. Offering level 7 accredited modules, EMPAC's fellowship programme enabled 30 police officers and staff to collaborate with their academic colleagues in primary research activity. This led to changes in the way research is designed, delivered and commissioned in forces across the region, making it more focused on current force challenges and on developing practical solutions.

The impact of this activity across the five collaborations has been far reaching. Fellows developed their own and others' capability around using and generating research evidence, played a pivotal role in developing infrastructures to embed an evidence-based approach into everyday

policing and helped academic colleagues gain insight into police organisations and practices. The three advanced practitioners seconded from Merseyside Police into the LJMU project team took on key roles. These included facilitating and delivering undergraduate and postgraduate teaching sessions, supervising students, developing new agendas for practice-based research activity and continuing to apply and promote EBP in their everyday roles.



**Senior Officer Jane Birkett,**  
National Crime Agency

#### The Open University:

“Three months as a senior practitioner fellow has taught me many things, not least that, despite the chasm of differences between law enforcement and academia, the two can work shoulder to shoulder on key research. The opportunity has forged stronger links between our organisations and more collaborations are now flourishing, not to mention the relationships it has afforded us with various police forces. Likewise, the research I was able to conduct has provided the beginnings of an evidence base to otherwise unexplored work and been extremely well received and useful to the NCA.”



**Inspector Carl McNulty,**  
Merseyside Police



**Temporary Detective  
Constable Amy Rutland,**  
Leicestershire Police

Key reported impacts from these fellowships and exchanges include:

- providing opportunities for continuous two-way knowledge exchange across ranks and roles
- building capability, skills and confidence in use of research among police officers and staff
- involvement of practitioners in co-creating research
- bridging the gap between research and practice communities, with secondees acting as 'knowledge brokers' between their force, academics and other key stakeholders
- helping to ensure research and evidence are tailored to improving policing practice
- helping to embed evidence into practice
- acting as 'evidence champions' to support continued engagement with and promotion of EBP.

### Liverpool John Moores University:

“ When I started my secondment at LJMU, I had little knowledge of EBP and had not been in an academic setting for over 10 years. Since then, I have:

- worked with academics to develop and deliver a postgraduate certificate to 70 officers
- supervised colleagues delivering policy-relevant research projects
- helped set up a unit where students can come into the force to solve problems with real-life cybercrimes
- given lectures to undergraduate and postgraduate students on EBP
- carried out my own research
- built up personal relationships with LJMU staff so I know who to talk to when we have an issue
- presented at an international conference about Merseyside's work on EBP.

When I sit down with my PKF colleagues and reflect on what we've achieved over the two years, it really is staggering. ”

### EMPAC:

“ The EMPAC fellowship scheme enabled me to carry out research into my area of interest. I partnered with academics specialising in modern slavery and victim support. They guided me through the whole process, from deciding how best to collect my evidence, to how to select my participants and analyse the results. The experience has resulted in a piece of research which I hope can inform how we work with partner agencies to assist victims of this abhorrent crime. I would strongly encourage more frontline officers to undertake academic research - if you have recognised there is a problem which needs addressing, then you are in a strong place to solve it. Everybody should take responsibility in shaping policing for the future. ”

## Impact on academia

Much of the discussion in this report is focused on impact in the policing context. This section describes the impact of the PKF on academia.

Existing evidence shows that police and academic partners have achieved varying degrees of success in establishing cohesive and sustainable collaborations. It has been argued that perhaps academia has not understood policing and the operational contexts of policing as well as it should. And equally, that the police have too often viewed academics with a degree of suspicion and been reticent to fully engage with the academic world. The cause of tension could be due to higher education institutions (HEIs) having a more reflective approach and the police a more reactive one, especially in an operational context.

Academic leads described how PKF activity has permeated academia to influence knowledge, daily practice and overall performance, especially with regard to collaboration and academic impact for REF purposes. It has changed the way research is viewed by some academics, highlighting the potential role practitioners have in developing, delivering and translating research. It has supported the growth of research centres

of policing expertise and put new emphasis on practitioner-led research training and guidance that has the capacity to reach beyond policing-related disciplines.

Partners also described how the PKF has led to:

- new opportunities for curriculum development, including degree apprenticeships, by building on existing research and learning expertise **(CPRL, Keele)**
- positive improvements in teaching portfolio and enriched curriculums, for example, frontline officers delivering teaching and new learning pathways with an emphasis on evidence-informed practice **(LJMU)**
- stronger alliances between academics within and between different disciplines in a university **(ExPERT)**
- HEI networks finding commonalities and shared objectives, leading to increased respect and trust and the creation of cross-regional partnerships driven by collaboration rather than by competition **(EMPAC)**
- sharing potential teaching and funded research opportunities, distributing rewards across HEIs **(EMPAC)**.

While some tensions between police and academic partners remain, it is clear from the review that academic partners in PKF collaborations have a greater understanding of policing and its operational demands. This understanding has in turn helped shape how the HEIs engaged in the collaborations, interacted and collaborated with police organisations. A greater understanding of police contexts has also helped HEIs ensure that research outputs remain valid and valuable to operational police practice.

“ It gives access to real problems which academics would never have been able to access without the (collaboration). The value added is fantastic. ”

Academic, hybrid



## Partners' perceptions of impact: survey findings

An online survey<sup>7</sup> was conducted with participants involved in the PKF collaborations to explore their experiences, including their views on the key strengths and challenges of the partnership and their overall levels of satisfaction. The survey received 120 responses. This low response limited the nature and extent of analysis possible, with responses unlikely to be representative of all staff involved in the programme, but did provide some insight into the views of those who responded to the survey.

Those who did respond to the survey were generally satisfied with all aspects of the partnership they were involved in. This includes the extent to which they felt that partners worked effectively together towards common goals, the quality of the project's leadership and administration and its efficiency in managing resources. While police and academic respondents were both generally satisfied, academics were consistently more satisfied than their policing partners, particularly in the administration and management of the partnership.

The survey listed 11 potential benefits of partnership involvement and asked respondents to state whether or not they had received the benefit as a result of participating in the partnership (see table 1). The benefits that respondents were most likely to say they had received were the 'development of valuable relationships' and 'enabling individuals to have a greater impact than would have been possible individually'. Interestingly, 89 per cent of academic partners reported that 'development of new skills' was a benefit that was realised within the partnership. This reinforces the finding reported later in this review that knowledge exchange is two-way, with academic staff learning from as well as sharing knowledge with their policing colleagues.



**Quoc Vo**  
**Detective Sergeant,**  
Thames Valley Police

### Centre for Policing Research and Learning:

“The PKF gave me the opportunity to work full time with the OU's research team on a six-month secondment. The co-creation of research by academics and practitioners created an environment of mutual benefit and learning, building on the expertise of each and resulted in research that is of real practical value for practitioners while at the same time developed the academic knowledge. It has made me a better police officer by understanding how research can be used to improve policing. It also allowed me to better champion EBP to other officers by giving me the knowledge and credibility to do so.”

7. The survey included questions developed by the National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools (2008). Partnership self-assessment tool. Hamilton, ON: McMaster University. <http://www.nccmt.ca/knowledge-repositories/search/10>

Table 1: Partners' experience of stated benefits: academic and police responses

Benefit (ordered alphabetically)	Academics		Police	
	agreeing^		agreeing~	
	%	N	%	N
Ability to have a greater impact than I could have on my own	97	71	85	28
Ability to make a contribution to the community	96	71	73	24
Acquisition of additional financial support	65	48	42	14
Acquisition of useful knowledge about services, programs, or people in the community	97	71	78	25
Development of new skills	89	66	73	24
Development of valuable relationships	99	73	88	29
Enhanced ability to address an important issue	93	69	85	28
Enhanced ability to affect public policy	77	56	52	16
Enhanced ability to meet the needs of my constituency or clients	73	51	71	22
Heightened public profile	76	56	61	20
Increased utilisation of my expertise or services	96	71	81	26

Academic respondents were consistently more likely to agree with the statements than their police counterparts, particularly that the partnership enhanced their ability to 'make a contribution to the community', 'affect public policy' and 'had the potential to acquire additional financial support'.

^ Total responses from academics to each question ranged from 70 to 74

~ Total responses from police to each question ranged from 31 to 33

When asked about the drawbacks experienced as a result of partnership involvement, a similar pattern was observed, with a minority of respondents reporting drawbacks but with police partners more likely to report them than academic staff. As shown in table 2, the two most frequently reported drawbacks from both academic and police staff were ‘frustration and aggravation’ and ‘diversion of time away from other priorities’.

**Table 2: Partners’ experience of stated drawbacks: academic and police responses**

Drawback (ordered alphabetically)	Academics		Police	
	agreeing^		agreeing~	
	%	N	%	N
Conflict between my job and the partnership’s work	11	8	24	8
Diversion of time and resources away from other priorities or obligations	32	24	38	12
Frustration or aggravation	19	14	42	14
Insufficient credit given to me for contributing to the accomplishments of the partnership	9	7	27	9
Insufficient influence in partnership activities	16	12	33	11
Viewed negatively due to association with other partners or the partnership	4	3	6	2

^ Total responses from academics to each question ranged from 73 to 74

~ Total responses from police to each question ranged from 32 to 33

## Sustainability

A key question at the start of the PKF was whether the fund could support the development of sustainable police-academic partnerships. Three-quarters of survey respondents (N=103) agreed that their partnership was sustainable. Respondents did raise concerns that as the programme came to an end, however, priorities would change. For example, time previously dedicated to the project would be reallocated to other tasks, with lack of future funding a key barrier to partnership sustainability.

That said, although varied in extent, continued funding has been secured by some collaborations. There is evidence of financial commitment from academic institutions, forces and other funding bodies for new co-designed research projects and extending multi-disciplinary expert groups and EBP roles.

Also pivotal to sustainability, is the extent to which the PKF could lead to real changes in ways of working between police partners and academics, and establish the structures, processes and mechanisms required to facilitate sustainability and commitment going forward; activity not necessarily dependent on additional funding.

Survey respondents described how many issues associated with developing the partnership had already been addressed during the start-up phase of the project. Work to date provided secure foundations to expand the scope of the partnership and use new evidence to provide tailored solutions to specific policing issues.

Table 3 provides some promising examples of sustaining activity across the 14 collaborations. This includes the legacy of new knowledge exchange hubs, networks and relationships within, and between organisations and regions, that have continued beyond the life of the PKF.

“The passion and commitment is very strong; we simply need further funds.”

Academic, hybrid

“Connections (established) with other forces and provided individuals continue... (there is a) strong foundation to build upon.”

Police, centre of expertise

Table 3: Partnership sustaining activities reported on completing the programme

Collaboration	Partnership sustaining activities include:
BPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ongoing work to progress and embed the tools and resources.</li> <li>■ Two major co-produced grant applications made to support future opportunities for collaboration.</li> <li>■ Funding secured from police partner to support continuation of the academic advisory group for another two years and to extend EBP training to additional staff.</li> </ul>
Bedfordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continued work with the National Working Group (NWG) CSE Network (over 14,000 UK members), the Child Sexual Abuse Centre of Expertise and other contacts to set up jointly run research and practice forums, disseminate key findings and identify funding opportunities for further research.</li> <li>■ Academics continue to support police partners to ensure their work is published in academic journals, facilitate links with other relevant academics, provide email updates on policy and practice and participate in police workshops and seminars.</li> <li>■ The PKF team will continue to liaise with the NPCC lead for child protection and abuse investigation to support their work and discuss new opportunities.</li> </ul>
Cambridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ One hundred police officers and staff have produced master's theses under the supervision of Cambridge academics, with many forging ongoing links with academics in priority expert areas providing new opportunities for sustained knowledge exchange which cuts across regional boundaries.</li> <li>■ Cambridge has launched their journal of evidence-based policing with the first volume including articles based on shortened versions of the thesis research supported by the PKF.</li> </ul>
City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Academic team continues to work with police partners and the College of Policing to gain accreditation of the SOIT developed and delivered under the PKF.</li> </ul>
Connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Police and academic partners continue to meet regularly, with representation from operational staff and senior officers working in mental health.</li> <li>■ Further funding secured from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to ensure continued dissemination of findings to inform regional and national policy around police responses to mental health.</li> </ul>

Table 3: Partnership sustaining activities reported on completing the programme (*continued*)

Collaboration	Partnership sustaining activities include:
CPRL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Centre is now self-sustaining, with funding committed from the OU for another five years. Funding is also secured, and additional is being sought, from partner contributions and other funding bodies.</li> <li>■ Centre continues to provide and develop educational provision, carry out collaborative research, knowledge exchange activities, and develop new practical tools to benefit policing.</li> </ul>
EMPAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Partners committed to continuing the collaboration and are currently exploring a revised vision that directly aligns with priorities of regional Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC).</li> <li>■ Funding in place to support the continuing role of a knowledge exchange manager to support coordinating EBP activity and maximise the benefits of the PKF investment.</li> </ul>
ExPERT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Financial commitment by partners to maintain a long-term partnership with regular meetings to scope out new research proposals and to embed EBP across the region.</li> <li>■ Funding secured for an academic research fellow to work with police partner for an additional year to help develop a sustainable infrastructure for EBP.</li> </ul>
Keele	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The PCC and chief constable have requested that the PKF academic team has a continued role in the transformation and EBP agenda in partner force.</li> <li>■ PKF staff have been commissioned post-PKF to conduct additional knowledge exchange activities and continue to work with the police, the office of police and crime commissioner and other agencies to share PKF learning across key themed areas.</li> <li>■ The Keele Policing Academic Collaboration (KPAC) has also been established as a sustainable legacy founded in knowledge co-production to ensure the continued development of EBP in the region.</li> </ul>

Table 3: Partnership sustaining activities reported on completing the programme (*continued*)

Collaboration	Partnership sustaining activities include:
Leeds Beckett (CARI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The tools, techniques and knowledge developed under PKF remain available to police partners and will continue to provide improved capability for carrying out digital investigations.</li> <li>■ Ongoing work to develop and embed outputs into policy and practice forms the basis of new funding bids to ensure the legacy and sustainability of the collaboration.</li> </ul>
LJMU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ LJMU's continued representation on partner force's EBP Steering Group will help ensure the relationship is maintained and future opportunities to collaborate can be explored.</li> <li>■ The new Knowledge Hub provides a mechanism for LJMU and other HEIs to continue to engage with partner force.</li> <li>■ New postgraduate diploma in evidence-informed practice provides the platform to maintain the continuous academic development of practitioners.</li> <li>■ Members of the core PKF team are continuing to perform roles as force evidence champions to sustain and develop the good practice initiated by the PKF.</li> </ul>
OSCAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Funding secured for a 12-month project on digital behavioural influencing, a knowledge gap identified by the OSCAR collaboration.</li> <li>■ Co-developed ESRC bid to fund continued analysis of terrorist incident data collected during the PKF programme.</li> <li>■ The team continues to work with police partners to deploy OSCAR for significant major public order events and drive forward the development of open source work.</li> </ul>
Sheffield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ With funding from the N8 Policing Research Partnership, the evaluation of the project was extended to March 2018 in order to further improve the quality and quantity of the delivery of restorative justice by the three forces.</li> <li>■ Lessons from the evaluation are currently being analysed, written up and fed back to partners, and will be disseminated to practitioners and academics in 2018/19.</li> </ul>
Sussex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Exploring the possibility of training additional police staff in use of hate crime software platform.</li> </ul>

## Case study 1: Centre for Policing Research and Learning (CPRL)

The Open University's (OU) CPRL provides an example of how collaborative activities across the three objectives combine to support the PKF's overall aim.

The OU received the largest award under the PKF. It has since secured funding from the OU and police partners to continue its work for a further five years. It was also the largest funded collaboration, with partner police agencies growing from 12 to 18 over the funding period, currently 19 and representing over 60 per cent of the policing workforce. The number of OU academics working in the collaboration also significantly increased from 8 to 49 and has academics in all the OU's faculties and institutes.

The Centre's varied programme of educational, research and knowledge exchange activities has

demonstrated practice and culture change in policing and academia. This shows what can be achieved by police and academics working in a genuinely collaborative way to embed evidence-based practice.

It has coined the phrase 'research into practice, practice into research'. This highlights the two-way benefits of a collaborative approach in ensuring the value and relevance of research and its useful translation into policy and practice.

Through its holistic approach, it has co-produced research evidence which is reinforced through educational pathways, and shared and embedded through knowledge exchange activities. Some of these output and activities are detailed in figures 7 and 8.

Figure 7: CPRL programme of activity

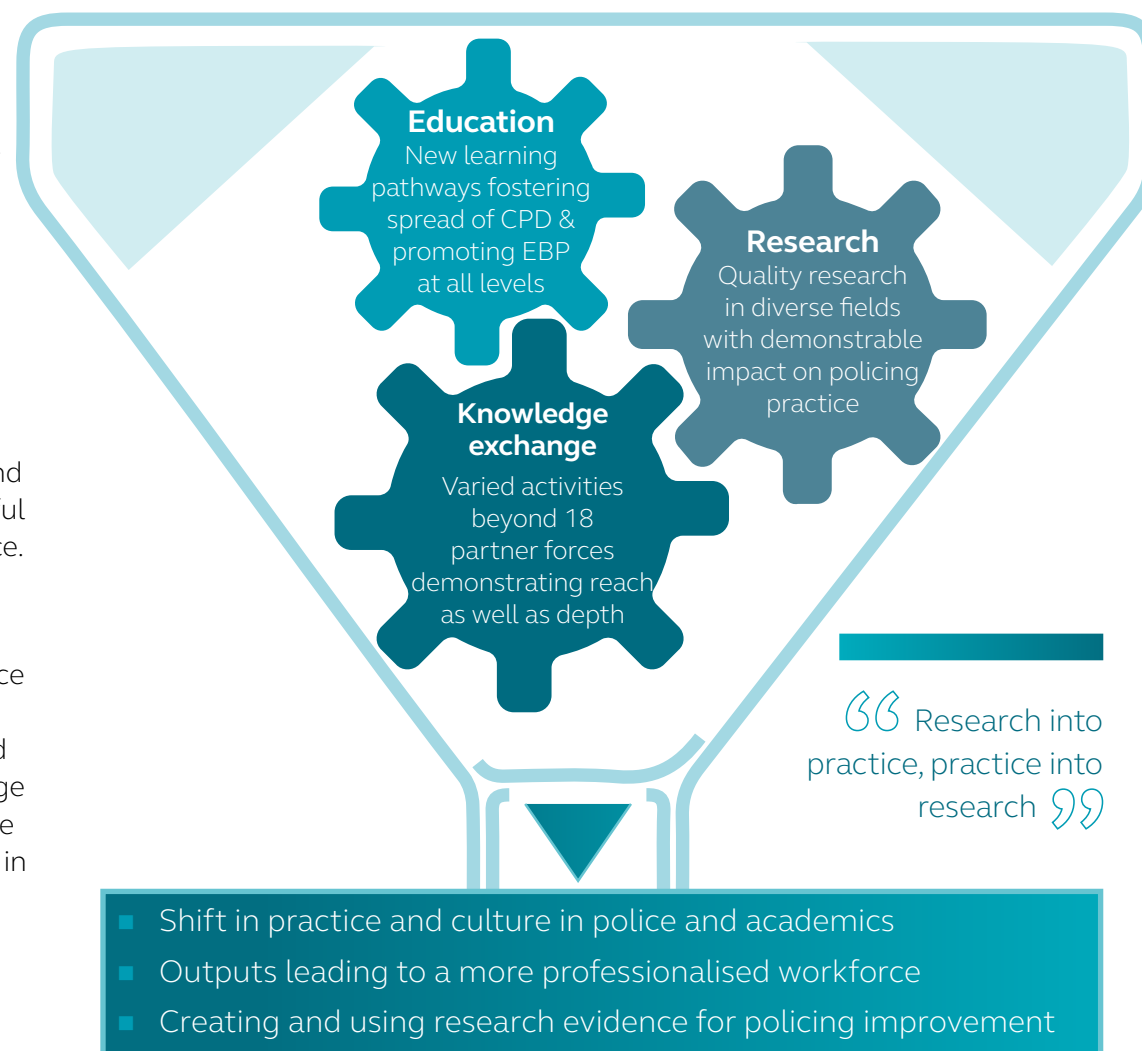




Figure 8: CPRL's key activities

Overall, the CPRL's activities and outputs are contributing to the creation of a workforce across all ranks and roles that is better equipped to meet future challenges and is more aligned with an evidence-based approach to policing in the future.

## Education

- Several entry points into study from informal CPD to PhD with much in between
- Free online open educational resources providing bite-sized informal learning, including a massive open online course (MOOC) on public leadership
- New postgraduate certificate in EBP designed and created specifically for policing
- New accredited undergraduate modules in subjects relevant to EBP presented for the police
- Three police officers / staff taking part-time PhD study

## Research

- Six problem-solving research projects created and completed under diverse themes
- Five senior police practitioners seconded to OU, working alongside academics to co-define research questions and apply research techniques to policing problems
- Quality research outputs with practical application to policing, for example, the development of a child interviewing simulator for use in police training and a method to identify research priorities now being used in public engagement

## Knowledge exchange

- 10 evidence cafés with 280 police attendees enabling sharing of research evidence and its practical application
- Five peer learning visits involving 119 police visitors to organisations that show promising practice, promoting change and innovation
- A series of international lectures, workshops and conferences on areas of emerging research and national policing priorities with outputs freely available online

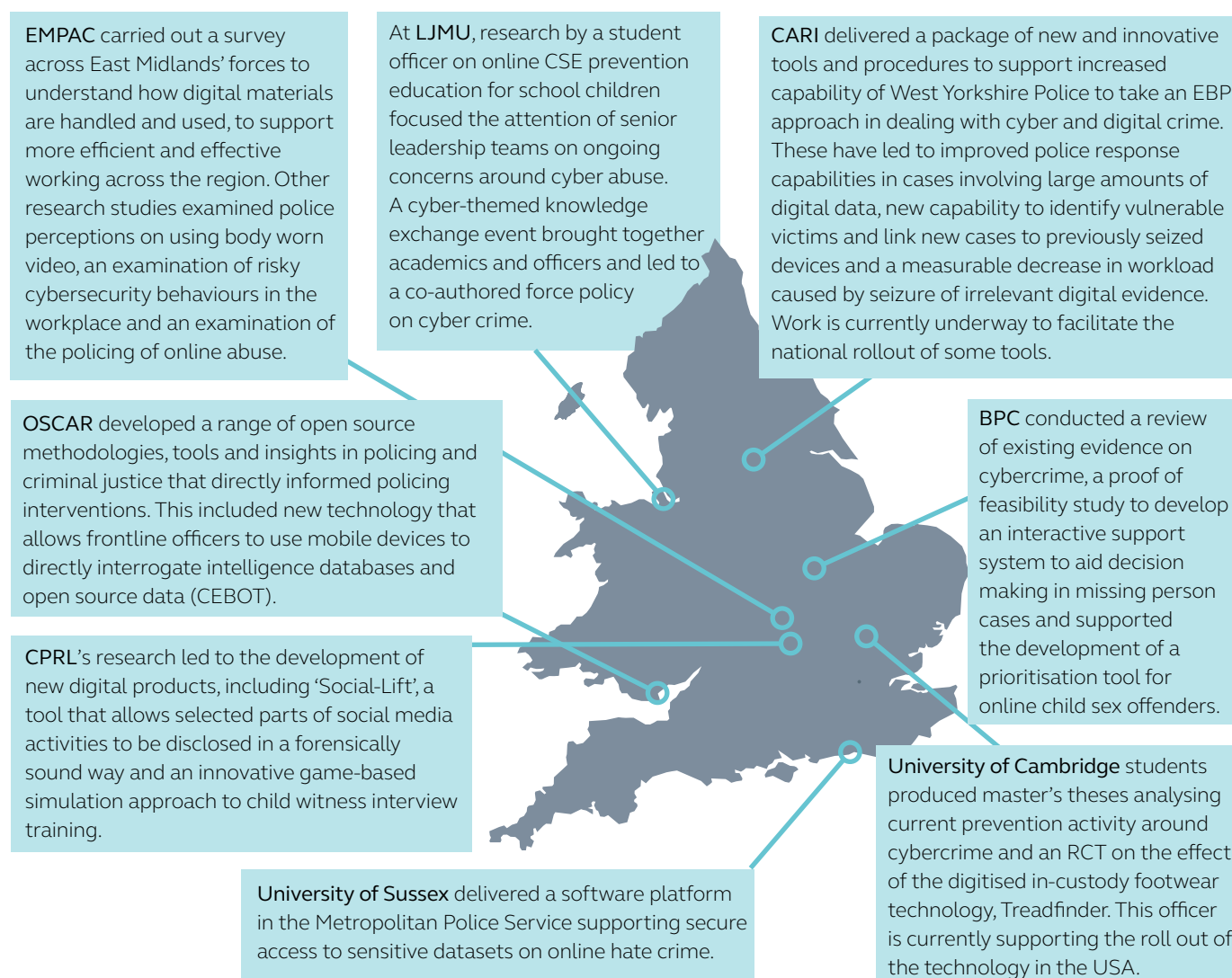
## Case study 2: Digital policing

Many PKF collaborations have focused on areas identified locally and nationally as key policing priorities. These include CSE, mental health, domestic abuse and cybercrime. Cybercrime and the need for advances in digital policing are identified in the [National Police Chiefs' Council's Policing Vision 2025](#) as key priorities for policing over the next 10 years. This priority is due to the need to improve the use of digital intelligence, evidence and capabilities across the criminal justice system.

Eight of the PKF collaborations demonstrated impact in digital policing. The following examples provide an insight into the extent and breadth of activity in this area, from developing understanding of criminal cyber activity, to delivering new tools and procedures to make better use of digital evidence and effectively responding to challenges.

While digital policing is presented as an example, other priority areas such as CSE and domestic abuse equally could have been used to demonstrate the cross-cutting impact PKF has had on developing policy and practice in key priority areas.

Figure 9: Examples of PKF activity around digital policing



# What have we learned about police-academic partnerships?



Across the programme are numerous examples of how the PKF has developed and accelerated links between academia and the police, and its positive influence on decision making and the organisational working culture of the police service. PKF activities have also led to a better understanding of the academic and policing context including the structures, priorities and success measures that have influenced how impact has been experienced and identified by different parties, and the mechanisms for supporting sustainability going forward.

This section describes the learning from the PKF around the key mechanisms identified as underpinning partnership working, providing examples of when they have worked to facilitate the partnership and when their absence has served as a barrier to the partnership's effectiveness. Given the tight timescales of the programme, and the amount of time and effort required to establish the underlying infrastructures to support the projects and develop the required understanding and trust between the partners, the learning focuses on what is needed to build and maintain partnerships, with less emphasis on what is required to sustain them.

CC A partnership is a dynamic relationship among diverse actors, based on mutually agreed objectives, pursued through a shared understanding of the most rational division of labour based on the respective comparative advantages of each partner.

Partnership encompasses mutual influence, with a careful balance between synergy and respective autonomy, which incorporates mutual respect, equal participation in decision making, mutual accountability and transparency. CC

Brinkerhoff, 2002

## The seven building blocks to an effective partnership

The PKF review has identified seven key building blocks to establishing effective partnerships between the police and academics as presented in figure 10. These draw on findings from the analysis of the various strands of data described in the [method](#) section, most notably the interviews with project leads and responses to the online survey.

There is strong consensus on the key features identified in this review with those highlighted in previous studies, including the importance of leadership, systems and process, resource management and interpersonal relationships (Mattessich et al, 2001; Alpert et al, 2013). While the labels used may differ, the synergy in the factors identified across the studies holds true.

Figure 10: What does success look like for the PKF?



## Common vision

A shared vision, objectives and goals among all partners are crucial to building effective partnerships.

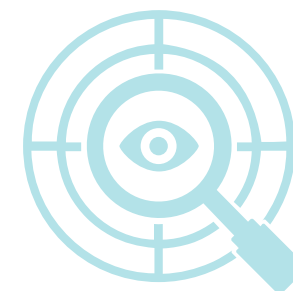
A common vision was an important foundation for effective collaborations. This was especially true for the more complex partnerships where there were multiple forces and universities. Those collaborations that took the time to agree the vision at the outset were more likely to be viewed by partners as more effective than those that did not. Having this synergy reportedly helped avoid misunderstandings and provided a mechanism to hold the collaboration together. It helped partners understand what was in and out of scope and avoided 'star bursting' (the temptation to focus on generating questions rather than developing answers).

Survey respondents reported challenges at the start of the collaborations due to differing priorities, aims and expectations between police and academic partners.

Time was required for fledgling partnerships to create common goals, which proved problematic given the relatively short timescales. Hybrid partnerships reported an additional difficulty in terms of bringing together a number of different organisations, each with their own priorities and methods of working.

The importance of having products from the partnership with practical application and relevance to policing was a central part of the police partners' vision. Survey respondents frequently cited this as a critical success factor. Examples included tangible outputs such as accredited courses, workshops or steering groups, and software tools, as well as research that could be directly applied to a policing problem to aid understanding.

Less tangible contributions were also identified by some, such as high standards of practitioner research and improved mechanisms for knowledge exchange.



“The funding was for a relatively short period in research terms so we really had to hit the ground running. If we had had more time we could have had a longer lead in time to develop relationships with groups outside the lead partners.”

Academic, hybrid

“There was a lack of clarity about partner's aims and the set-up process of partnership”

Police, hybrid

Working together to translate research into practice as part of this common vision was reported as another success factor for some partnerships. Some partners, however, reported that this element was not always incorporated into the vision and the implementation of new research and learning was left to the policing partners, who at times struggled with how best to do this. Lack of collaboration in this area tainted perceptions from some participating police partners as to the overall success of the collaboration.

Having a common vision ensured that the partnership was working on issues directly relevant to policing and consequently, the collaboration was seen as more fruitful. Police partners also felt that the more involved they were with setting the agenda, the more likely there was to be wider buy-in and engagement within the partnership across the participating forces. It was important that the agenda was not just set by senior officers but that representatives from across the force were involved. The benefit of wider involvement from within the police was thought to facilitate multiple perspectives and inter-disciplinary problem solving.

Some survey respondents, police and academics, felt that there hadn't been equal involvement of all partners in setting the agenda of the projects. They also felt their views were not sought or listened to, for example, in terms of identifying and prioritising research projects. Some partnerships were reported to have mapped research requirements to force strategic priorities but these were not always readily available or articulated at the level required to generate relevant research projects. There was a perception expressed by some that the research agenda was, at times, prioritised by a select few who shouted loudest.

A number of forces were involved in more than one collaboration. Some expressed the view that a sense of competition arose between these forces and that it was difficult to form relationships with other academic institutions that were not part of the PKF.

Need to ensure goals are aligned between police and academic partners so that meaningful research can be executed.

Police, hybrid

It has benefitted a couple of universities in the partnership which the majority of the PKF support / resources has gone towards. It has not been an equal or open partnership.

Academic, hybrid

Ability to creatively respond to practical real world issues.

Academic, capability

To be more focused as to whether the project is likely to have a realistic benefit to the police service.

Police, centre of expertise

## Management

Effective management of the supporting infrastructure is essential, particularly for more complex partnerships that involve multiple universities and forces.

Effective management was required in a number of different areas detailed below.

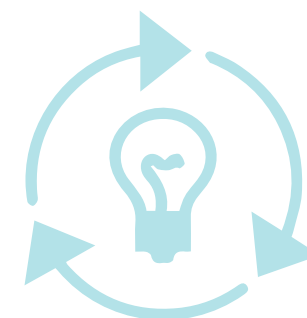
### Governance and project management

Establishing a clear and agreed governance and project management framework is integral to managing an effective collaboration.

Effective management of the partnerships and their associated work strands was seen as essential to a collaboration's success, especially for more complex projects where there were multiple partners and strands of work. Forces and universities often had different structures, approaches and working practices, for example, university teaching demands versus operational policing demands, and different partners 'came on stream' and worked at different speeds and with varying levels of commitment.

Partners felt it was important to include governance and project management capability in the infrastructure of the collaborations. A project management framework, with associated tools and processes, was required to manage activities and guide the partners. Partners felt that to be effective, project plans needed to be agreed at the outset. They also had to be realistic, with measurable outcomes, demonstrating interdependencies between the various strands (where relevant) and have built-in processes for monitoring and evaluating progress. Record keeping was important and having an agreed historical record helped avoid problems. Without a project management framework, it was not always clear who was doing what and how the individual strands were contributing to the overall delivery.

Some partnerships recognised the importance of this early in the process. From the outset, they established a project structure, governance and accountability with, for example, monthly project review meetings, steering groups and programme boards. They established realistic expectations with regard to what could and could not be delivered. This involved all participating partners



“Data takes a long time to come and different forces don't always have comparable data... IT infrastructure in police forces is subject to challenges... it is not always kept up to date and can be subjected to major changes at short notice, partly as a result of out-sourcing many aspects of IT maintenance. Danger that police services will have IT expertise hollowed out at just the moment when the knowledge is becoming increasingly important.”

Academic, hybrid

and also recognised the need for project plans to be flexible to changing circumstances.

Partnership coordination and support to manage the project to delivery was complex and demanding. People with the right skills to broker and manage the relationships were required. For example, police involvement in partnerships varied, with each participating force contributing in a different way. This could be supporting data collection, research mentoring or delivering EBP training, but had to be balanced against the academic partners' requirements. Many partnerships dedicated staff to managing the project and to act as the bridge between the participating partner organisations, managing communications and the project through to delivery.

By their own admission, some partnerships did not initially appreciate the benefits of a structured project management approach. For some, the time taken to recognise the need for and/or recruit a project manager meant that there was a disconnect between partnership activities during the first 12 months. Some reported that the lack of a clear management framework also meant that practical difficulties were not dealt with in a timely manner, delaying progress and running

the risk of undermining the partnership. The lack of a project or steering board meant that there were often individual conversations going on between the partners, with others not knowing whether a problem had been resolved, resulting in duplication of effort and an overall lack of clarity and direction.

### Data access and data sharing

Perhaps one of the most difficult management challenges faced by nearly all of the collaborations was around **data access, extraction** and **sharing** to enable delivery of the research projects. Many collaborations were built around specific projects where sharing data was critical to success so this caused significant delays and frustration. It was less problematic for those collaborations that already had an existing arrangement or relationship in place.

**Availability of source data** was also an issue for a small number of projects. There was evidence of contractual promises to share data not being met because information that was understood to be held by the police did not exist. In one case, promised training materials did not materialise other than in outline.

**Lack of clarity in requests** for data was also evident. Lack of knowledge and understanding of police, crime and incident data, and differences in terminology used by different partners led to misunderstanding the type and content of data required and provided.

In some projects, access to data was impeded by **IT issues**. This included having to change data systems to access the data (which could be costly and time consuming) and the inability of older data systems to meet new demands for data and analyses. While data was generally provided as promptly as possible, for some there were major issues which had significant impacts on project progress. For example, one collaboration waited up to eight months for some external data.

**Data sharing agreements** also led to some cumbersome processes. Where there were multiple collaborating partners, agreements often differed slightly for different partners. This led to lengthy discussions about whether or not individual agreements between partners were necessary or whether a generic agreement for all partners in the collaboration was acceptable. This again impeded progress.

Where there were multiple universities involved in a collaboration, there were often different



approaches to intellectual property (IP) and data confidentiality. Discussions to identify an acceptable and agreed way forward often proved lengthy. The PKF was relatively complex from an IP perspective in that there were joint funders providing funds to multiple partners across a different landscape of university arrangements. This issue was especially problematic in certain multi academic and/or multi police contexts.

Many suggested that it would have been useful at the outset of the PKF to have held a workshop to consider issues such as data sources, availability, access, permissions and sharing - valuable learning for the management of any future funds.

### Evaluation

One of the requirements of the fund was for collaborations to review and evaluate the partnership against its aims and objectives. Little thought was given to project evaluation in the early stages of the PKF. Most projects only started to consider it six months in, their initial focus being on start-up and getting projects up and running. The late consideration of evaluation needs made it difficult for collaborations to establish baseline, pre-project positions, especially where retrospective data were not readily available. An early workshop, to outline the principles of evaluation, in line with the outcomes of the programme as a whole, would have helped to address this delay.

As a minimum, evaluation of the programme and projects needed to consider the impacts of projects, the embedding of knowledge, and the strength and sustainability of collaborations. While this can be complex, the evaluation needs to recognise outcomes as well as the general progress made through the concepts of additionality and acceleration. In other words, has the PKF delivered something that, without the funding, would otherwise not have been delivered, or delivered as quickly? This can be relatively easy to assess with examples of additionality or acceleration including the presence of a new EBP steering groups, improved police-academic communication and the leveraging of additional funding.

Managing the IP and collaborative agreements between institutions was complicated.

Academic, hybrid

## Compatible partners

Effective partnerships are those that carefully consider their membership at an organisational and an individual level.

Survey respondents acknowledged the importance of the diversity and variety of partners, the knowledge and expertise of the individuals, and the credibility of key staff as key enablers for successful transfer of relevant information. The ability to manage cultural differences and to provide constructive criticism relating to the progress of the partnership, and enthusiastic and committed individuals with a drive to work together to overcome challenges and improve policing were also identified.

At the outset of the PKF, police partners were often requested to be part of a number of different partnerships, and they felt there was often insufficient information to allow decision-makers to make an informed choice about the most appropriate PKF bids to support. Some police partners felt it was important to have a variety of partners involved in the collaboration (within a university as well as across universities) as they felt they did then not feel tied to one provider. Conversely, others felt that deeper relationships could be developed when they were involved with a smaller collaboration.

Academic and policing organisations found it difficult to identify the most appropriate staff member to discuss potential partnerships. This, coupled with the short timescales for forming bids, created challenges for partnerships with no prior relationship with other police forces or academic institutions. This challenge was cited more frequently by members of hybrid partnerships, as these tended to be more complex in nature. They involved a number of police organisations and/or academic institutions, meaning it was more difficult to find compatible partners.



Change of staff within the project led to a filtered down version of what the actual plan was to be delivered / achieved and this also led to lack of buy-in at a senior/ strategic engagement.

Academic, hybrid

Greater involvement and engagement across the force partners was perceived by some academics to have maximised impact. A small number of respondents reported that a few key individuals dominated and other relevant departments were not always involved in the partnership. This led to a perception of an unequal partnership with a sub-group of powerful members making and implementing decisions.

Matching the skills and expertise of the academic institutions to the partnership goals was seen as a success factor by many of the collaborations. However a minority of academics believed that there was too much variation in the research standards employed across the academics. They suggested a more rigid selection criteria for membership based on research capacity and skills, with academic members having to demonstrate a strong record of research.

Respondents raised academic partners' theoretical and methodological perspectives as an issue, with examples of certain academic institutions' perspectives dominating the overall approach of the partnership. This gave greater credence to partnerships with multi-disciplinary academic partners. Consequently, matching skills and expertise and 'sensible diffusion' of roles and responsibilities within the partnership, were perceived a success.

Finally, one of the key barriers expressed in the survey and workshops was the level of staff turnover disrupting the continuity of the work and affecting delivery. More effective partnerships were seen as those that did not rely on a few personalities and people, but had teams which could continue the work. This was especially relevant for accessing and extracting data required by the partnerships.

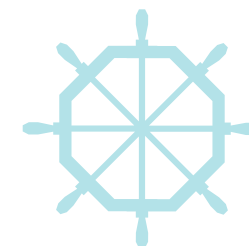
## Leadership

Strong leadership was viewed as crucial to a partnership's success, by police and academic partners.

Strong leaders were required to keep the partnership motivated; resolve conflicts quickly and decisively; secure strategic buy in from participating partners; and empower individuals to make the required changes to fulfil their roles. Leaders could not just be a nominal lead as the nature of the collaboration was then left to only those who were driven to see it succeed, and the impact of these individuals leaving was more keenly felt.

It was crucial for policing partners to secure the support of police leaders to demonstrate the institutional commitment to the partnership of forces and academia. Senior support was seen to legitimise the partnership and allowed the investment of time. The importance of senior buy-in and its continuity was viewed as fundamental, with examples given of the negative impact on project progress when senior police leads moved on during the project lifespan.

That said, securing force command team buy-in did not always translate to support further down the force. In some cases, the engagement of rank and file officers, first-line supervisors and middle managers was patchy and variable despite the clear commitment of the force command team. In such cases, there appeared to be suspicion of the collaboration, the motives of the partners and the value the projects could bring. This lack of commitment sometimes translated to seeing projects as an 'add on', requiring officers to work with the project and then get on with their day job, without recognising the inherent links between the two. The use of officer practitioners to smooth the way and champion the value of the partnership throughout the police organisations was cited as effective mitigation.



Senior buy-in at the level of the office of the police and crime commissioner (OPCC) and chief officer level is essential. Staying on top of these relationships and establishing champions helps especially given the challenges to key posts that have been experienced across the region. This will help with the sustainability of our work.

Police, hybrid

## Communication

Communication between the participating partners was essential, particularly for larger and more complex partnerships.

Effective communication was reported to strengthen trust and to help maintain the focus and value of the collaboration. Communication needed to be frequent and use a variety of channels. Having regular face-to-face meetings was seen as crucial as they allowed time for relationships to develop and strengthen. They also ensured continued commitment to the network as members did not feel detached from the research process and could deal with conflict more easily. Smaller and localised collaborations believed their size made communication easier.

Communication between all members of the participating organisations, not just the work package leads, was highlighted as an area for improvement in some collaborations. Examples cited included poor dissemination of information to frontline officers as to why they were tasked with supporting a project. Communication challenges were also identified between universities' administration and finance departments which, for example, led to delays in



“ There is a need to create a ‘safe space’ for academics and police colleagues to discuss research findings and implications, to develop the translation of studies collaboratively where there is understanding that individual research projects do not answer all the questions without the input and practice knowledge. ”

Academic, hybrid

setting up contracts and infrastructure. Selective communication, specifically around progress and decision making, was also identified as an issue for some of the partnerships.

One issue raised early in the PKF programme was the need for cross-project communication, mainly where there were synergies between projects. For example, there were a number of projects across the PKF that were exploring mental health. Connect, led by the University of York, recognised this and convened a workshop with the other relevant PKF projects to share their emerging findings. This ensured that all of the research produced across the PKF would have the broadest possible impact.

At the request of many of the collaborations, a Knowledge Hub was established halfway through the programme to support communication across PKF partnerships. It provided a secure platform to share information and materials and enabled members to discuss challenges, issues and learning within, and between, projects. Despite these requests, there was generally very little engagement with the Hub, with only two projects actively using it. Of the remaining 12 collaborations, five never used it and seven logged

in and invited additional members to join but did not actively engage with those members. Reasons for lack of use were not identified. It could be because it was only introduced partway through the funding period, or perhaps partners did not realise that they would have to invest time to learn how to use it and to proactively bring other members into their community.

## Flexibility

Flexibility and tolerance to change, in terms of expectations and allocating resources, are important in effective project and partnership management.

Changes in police operational priorities, capacity and availability of staff resource, as well as delays to the research process, were all common occurrences that affected the delivery timescales. Many staff were involved in the collaboration in addition to other roles and, given the demands placed on police and academic staff, ensuring long term commitment was a challenge. This was a barrier most frequently reported in centres of expertise, where competing demands affected the ability of the partnership to carry out some functions.

Agreeing the extent of deviation acceptable to partners at the outset gave members the authority to be flexible within their boundaries.



“Implementing each activity necessitates flexibility. There needs to be space to make small tweaks that allow project partners to tailor and adjust activities and potentially minimise one to benefit another more impactful activity.”

Academic, centre of expertise

“Sometimes the day job got in the way – unavoidable.”

Police, centre of expertise

## Respect

Cultural differences need to be recognised and respected, at the individual and organisational level.

Partnership is where two or more organisations combine their efforts to achieve mutually beneficial goals, but this typically means recognising the varied cultural norms and practices of each of the partner organisations (Tompson et al, 2017).

Police are often described as action-orientated and decisive, operating in a command and control hierarchy within a changing political and organisational environment so research findings need to be clear and easily operationalised (e.g. Lum et al, 2012; Rojek et al, 2015). Academics, on the other hand, are trained to be critical and reflective, and more comfortable with uncertainty (e.g. Strang, 2012; Tompson et al, 2017). Some partnerships were able to transcend these differences in pursuit of common objectives. They

valued the strengths of each participating partner while acknowledging weaknesses, with neither sector partner looking to impose their culture on the other. This created a sense of mutual respect, with shared values and a clearer understanding of the constraints and opportunities members are working under.

To a varied extent, some of the collaborations were already in place prior to the PKF. Where such links between universities and forces were already established, recognition of cultural differences posed less of a problem. Partnerships that were new or in the very early stages faced a steep learning curve. For example, there was a lack of understanding of each other's methods of operation, perspectives, imperatives and drivers, which was felt to inhibit progress.



“ Culture change in both policing and academia is needed to encourage open communication to reduce eye-rolling and sighing. ”

Police, hybrid



Specific cultural inhibitors among some of the policing partners were reported. These included:

- a general negative attitude and resistance to change
- research (and academics) viewed as a challenge to professional judgement and/or not valued
- police operating in an environment of numerically driven targets that impedes adopting an evidence-based approach
- a culture that is largely reactive rather than proactive.

It was also felt by police partners that academia did not always understand the policing context. Requiring the police to do something (or not do something) ‘because the evidence says so’ discounted the complexities of operational police practice. A greater understanding of police contexts would help academia to ensure research evidence remains valid and of value to operational police practice. The practicalities of collaboration, especially in the early stages, appeared to be built on a clear understanding of each other’s stance.

At the individual level, a common complaint from academics and police was the lack of time for police officers and staff to support the activities of the partnerships. Competing demands and budget reductions were given as reasons for non-involvement, particularly from middle management. This was seen to affect the timeliness of responses, where there was a commonly held view that swift responses in policing were just not possible. Competing demands on time and the need for requests to go through the police chain of approval made it hard to get decisions made and actions taken.

This review highlights the value that police and academic partners have placed on achieving this greater understanding and respect for the different organisational cultures they operate in.

Finally, the PKF is seen as an essential enabler for generating opportunities for policing research and providing police practitioners with the enthusiasm to become involved in the research process.

“We ... learned that working with a very hierarchical organisation, like the police, needs to be approached in a somewhat different manner from working with other, less hierarchical organisations. We have enjoyed working with ... forces and found key contacts and participants to be approachable, helpful and well organised, a pleasure to work with.”

Academic, hybrid

“Aligning our work with the two occupational / managerial cultures -police and HEI - both organisations need to develop more agile and responsive approaches to knowledge exchange and partnership.”

Police, centre of expertise

Building partnerships takes time and is more than producing outputs. It is about taking the time to set up the supporting infrastructure, considering how the partnership will function to achieve its goals and most importantly, building trust. Just under one fifth (19 per cent) of survey respondents felt that the developing trusted working relationships between partners was key to their success. This encompasses trust and respect, co-operation and collaboration and an openness to learn from experiences of other partners and use this to shape future partnership activity. It is clear that there is the need for a 'true' collaboration: a relationship that involves all parties in partnership development as opposed to a traditional researcher/research subject relationship between academics and police.

... Have been able to gain substantial insight into how the police function as an organisation and deliver policing. This has been invaluable in understanding how best to deliver research in a policing context.

Academic, hybrid

... I have learnt the positive benefits of developing an evidenced based approach to policing.

Police, hybrid

... Enforcement colleagues being open to critical academic scrutiny in private so academic colleagues can build things to support tangible needs and constructive public presentation of the enforcement challenges and potential solutions.

Academic, hybrid

## Partnership types

It has not been possible in this review to state which partnerships were more or less effective than others as each came with their own successes and challenges. However, it has allowed us to identify the features of a partnership that are likely to have the greatest impact on its success.

Winer and Ray (1994) identify three different types of partnership, as described in Table 4, which provide a useful framework for considering the characteristics of the partnerships that emerged under the PKF.

Table 4: Partnership types

Co-operative	Co-ordinated	Collaboration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involve relationships between individuals rather than between organisations</li> <li>Informal relationships, each organisation functions separately</li> <li>Short-term goals, lack clearly defined mission and structure</li> <li>No joint planning</li> <li>Information is conveyed as needed</li> <li>Resources kept separate, share only information about the project at hand</li> <li>Meetings at key milestones but do not work actively together</li> <li>Often ends on receipt of findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual relationships are supported by the organisations they represent</li> <li>More formal relationships with some evidence of joint planning and division of roles</li> <li>Organisations tend to operate independently of each other but with a shared understanding of mission</li> <li>Some project-specific planning</li> <li>Definite channels established for communication</li> <li>Often formed through funding opportunities and tend to be reliant on this for continued sustainability</li> <li>Interaction often focused around a specific effort or program</li> <li>Often cease to exist when funding no longer available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individuals have full commitment of partner organisations and their leaders</li> <li>Partnership operates as the sum of its parts, rather than as individual organisations</li> <li>Collective purpose and full commitment to common mission and goals</li> <li>Comprehensive planning with integrated strategies</li> <li>Well-defined communication channels</li> <li>Pooled or jointly secured resources</li> <li>One or more projects undertaken for longer term results</li> <li>Share results and rewards with longer term efforts to secure ongoing resources</li> </ul>
<p>LOWER INTENSITY*  HIGHER INTENSITY</p>		

\* Intensity relates to risk, time, resources, impact and strength of commitment

Co-operative partnerships reflect more traditional police-academic relationships where individual academics are commissioned by police, or police partners provide data to support the project requirements. They have fewer partnership challenges to overcome but at the expense of reducing the value of partnership outputs. While some PKF collaborations demonstrated traits of co-operation, most operated as co-ordinated partnerships, with some evidence of shared vision and joint project management mechanisms. Operating at this mid-level is not unexpected, given the fund's two-year life cycle.

Collaboration partnerships represent the pinnacle of co-produced research. They have more challenges to overcome but the value of the co-produced output and the sustainability of the partnership is maximised through the level of co-production. A small number of the PKF partnerships demonstrated characteristics of this, with evidence of, or progress towards, establishing long term trust and a sustainable research agenda.

“... I strongly believe that this has been the most important innovation in policing during my service. In times of austerity, using methods that can be empirically shown to work is vital, not only in terms of operational capacity but from a public confidence and legitimacy perspective. It also leads to innovation and creativity and helps align some of the best minds in the country to challenging policing problems.”

Police, capability

## Conclusion

Over a relatively short period, the PKF has developed and delivered a broad and far-reaching programme of activities and outputs with examples of promising impact consistent with the fund's objectives. It has demonstrated a real impact on how police practitioners and academics can work collaboratively to build capability, generate new research evidence and deliver innovative knowledge exchange activities. This includes how research is generated and produced, and our understanding of the mechanisms that facilitate applying research evidence into police policy and practice operationally and strategically.

At the start of the programme we identified seven indicators outlining what success would look like for the PKF and this report has demonstrated impact across all of these.

It has described how new capability building mechanisms developed and delivered under the PKF, including EBP workshops, academic programmes, fellowships and co-produced research projects are contributing to an ongoing cultural shift towards the increased use of research evidence in policing.

Figure 11: PKF success measures



This includes developing a questioning culture among some officers and staff and increasing their willingness to engage with research and academia which will help drive evidence-based approaches forward.

We have also provided examples of how research activity has contributed to developing understanding in a number of key policing priority areas, providing new insight that has practical application to everyday policing, as well as contributing more generally to policing improvement through changes to training, policy and strategy. It is recognised that there are still significant gaps in understanding these big issues and a greater focus on these going forward will help to better frame research questions and integrate research into routine decision making where appropriate.

The report presents evidence of strong collaborative relationships at an organisational and personal level that have outlasted the PKF programme. It highlights the structures and mechanisms now in place that will support continued knowledge sharing and translation necessary to embedding EBP approaches across policing.

At the heart of the PKF, and underpinning its contribution to evidence-based practice, is its potential to accelerate the development of collaborative academic-police partnerships throughout England and Wales. There are a number of strong success stories in the fostering and maturing police-academic collaborations under the PKF programme. Many partnerships have been successful in taking ownership of specific policing challenges and exploring how best these can be resolved through research. Partners have gained valuable insights into the working practices of partner agencies, which proved beneficial for knowledge exchange. Working in partnership has increased opportunities and enthusiasm for research.

We also now have a better understanding of how the worlds and pace of policing and academia differ. This is not only important for the police and academia, but also helps programme funders better frame commissioning and grant awarding processes, in turn facilitating more effective partnerships in the future.

## Future challenges

Tensions between a more reflective approach of academic establishments and a more reactive approach of police organisations were observed across the PKF programme. This emphasised the importance of establishing shared values between partners going forward.

The practicalities of sustainable collaboration, especially in the early stages, appear to be built on a clear understanding of each other's stance. Recognising rather than discounting the value of existing research, policy and practice, and the contexts in which they have been delivered, would also further contribute to the full engagement of practitioners.

Several further barriers to sustaining partnerships have been widely identified, not least, the challenges associated with a lack of financial support. It appears there is a high level of commitment to continue the various collaborative activities, and recognition of progress in building relationships between partners. However, there is concern that this may not be enough to sustain partnerships without some

financial support. A key mechanism in this regard is the ability to demonstrate impact of the activities delivered through the partnership when seeking further funds.

The PKF has achieved promising but early steps in a longer journey. Two years is a relatively short period in which to develop, deliver and embed activities. Some benefits are just starting to come to fruition, while others are dependent on securing additional funds to maximise impact.

It could be argued that police and academic partners engaging and working together is clear evidence of the additionality and acceleration delivered by the PKF. It would, however, also be valuable to understand the impact the PKF has had on police effectiveness and efficiencies and academic practice through the funded partnerships. For this reason, it might be prudent to consider revisiting the PKF collaborations in 12-18 months to understand legacy impacts of the programme and contribution to delivering longer-term outcomes.

This review has shown that the PKF has made a significant contribution to developing police-academic partnerships and adopting evidence-based approaches. Through new partnerships and changed ways of working, there is potential to have a sustained impact across all levels of policing. The challenge going forward will be to maintain the momentum across the collaborations. To continue to grow and develop, the drive to progress must be embedded in organisations and not be dependent on individual personalities. To embed the many products and outputs into police policy and practice and add to the knowledge base, the focus needs to be on co-driven knowledge translation and sustained activities built on strong police academic partnerships.

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